

PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF SOUTH CAROLINA

CHIEF HEARING OFFICER DIRECTIVE

DOCKET NO. 2021-66-A ORDER NO. 2021-30-H

MARCH 16, 2021

CHIEF HEARING OFFICER: David Butler

DOCKET DESCRIPTION:

South Carolina Office of Regulatory Staff's Motion to Solicit Comments from Utilities and Other Interested Stakeholders Regarding Measures to Be Taken to Mitigate Impact of Threats to Safe and Reliable Utility Service

MATTER UNDER CONSIDERATION:

Petition to Intervene of the South Carolina Public Service Authority ("Santee Cooper")

CHIEF HEARING OFFICER'S ACTION:

This matter comes before the Chief Hearing Officer on the Petition to Intervene of the South Carolina Public Service Authority ("Santee Cooper"). No objections to the Petition to Intervene have been filed.

Under Commission regulation, the Commission must determine whether or not the petitioning party has clear factual support or grounds for the proposed intervention. S.C. Regs. 103-825A(3) requires that parties filing a Petition to Intervene in a matter pending before the SC Public Service Commission must set forth clearly and concisely:

- (a) The facts from which the nature of the petitioner's alleged right or interest can be determined;**
- (b) The grounds of the proposed intervention;**
- (c) The position of the petitioner in the proceeding.**

Santee Cooper clearly sets out the facts from which the nature of the right or interest can be determined, the grounds of the proposed intervention, and its position in this case. In its Motion in this Docket, the Office of Regulatory requested that the Commission "allow the South Carolina Public Service Authority to provide information to the Commission regarding measures the utilities have taken and plan to take to mitigate the negative impacts of potential ice storms and other dangerous weather conditions and to ensure peak customer demands on the utility system can be met during extreme weather scenarios."

Santee Cooper asserts that it is South Carolina's largest power provider and the ultimate source of electricity for about 2 million people across the state of South Carolina and, if granted intervention, would report on the steps it has taken and will continue to mitigate the negative impacts extreme cold weather conditions on meeting peak customer demand.

Santee Cooper also notes that, if granted intervention it would also learn from the experience of other utilities participating in this proceeding.

Santee Cooper points out that it has historically maintained reliable service through extreme winter events, most recently the 2014 Polar Vortex, in which Santee Cooper was able to serve its firm load, while at the same time identify from that event opportunities for improvement. Those opportunities included, according to Santee Cooper, taking incremental steps to provide a higher level of protection to critical systems through the installation of enclosures, space heaters and more robust heat tracing, as well as refining seasonal protocols for the regular inspection and repair of these systems.

Santee Cooper believes that it is in the public interest to allow it to participate in this proceeding and, if permitted to intervene, Santee Cooper will fully cooperate and submit all information requested by the Commission concerning the measures Santee Cooper has taken and will take to mitigate the negative impacts of potential ice storms and other dangerous weather conditions to the provision of safe and reliable utility service, and ensure peak customer demands on the utility system can be met during extreme weather scenarios. Further, it believes that its request to be made a party of record in this proceeding in addition to being in the public interest, is consistent with the policies of the Commission in encouraging maximum public participation in issues before it, is consistent with the Governor's request on this matter, and will allow Santee Cooper to participate in an important initiative that ensure continued electric reliability across the state's grid.

Pursuant to these facts, this Hearing Officer holds that the South Carolina Public Service Authority ("Santee Cooper") has successfully satisfied the criteria for intervention stated in the Commission Regulation. Its interest in this matter can clearly be discerned, as can the grounds for the intervention. Further, its position is clearly stated.

As previously noted, there are no objections to the intervention. Accordingly, the Petition to Intervene of the South Carolina Public Service Authority ("Santee Cooper") is hereby granted in this Docket. This ends the Chief Hearing Officer's Directive.